

Spring 2007

MichiganGenealogist

Genealogy news from the Department of History, Arts and Libraries

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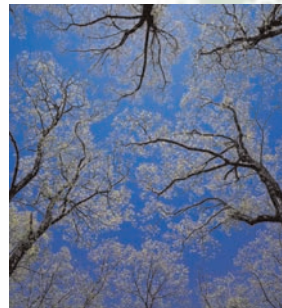
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After a long winter, spring has finally arrived in Michigan. With the warmer weather (and clearer roads), it becomes more appealing for family historians to travel to research facilities across the state. I encourage everyone to get out there and do a little genealogical exploring. Check back with your local library and see if they have added anything new over the winter months. Make a list of the places you want to go to do research, and don't forget about the Library of Michigan.

The warmer weather also brings a large number of genealogical workshops and training sessions. Contact your local society to see what is happening in your area. The Library of Michigan is well into the planning of the 2007 Abrams Seminar scheduled for Friday, July 20 and Saturday, July 21. This two-day seminar is focused on promoting the study of family history and educating people on the vast resources maintained at the Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan. Learn more about the Abrams Seminar later in this issue of *Michigan Genealogist*. If you have questions or would like more information, contact the Library at (517) 373-1300 or librarian@michigan.gov.

The newly remodeled and expanded Allen County Public Library (ACPL) has been open for the last several weeks. They have greatly expanded the size of the genealogy section, opened the stacks, added more computers and readers, and created more comfortable research space. A great genealogy collection has only become better, and it is only a few hours away. Everyone should take advantage of this tremendous resource. Their friendly and knowledgeable staff makes using their collection a breeze. If you have questions, you can contact the ACPL at genealogy@acpl.info or (260) 421-1200.

As the weather thaws, it is time for us to ramp up our research activities. Take a look around you. Michigan has tremendous family history resources located all around the state. Get in the car and take advantage of the various collections at your disposal. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Happy searching!

Randy Riley
Special Collections Manager



Mark Your Calendars! Abrams Genealogy Seminar to be Held July 20-21

By Kris Rzepczynski, Library of Michigan

The Library of Michigan is pleased to announce the 2007 Abrams Genealogy Seminar, to be held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center on Friday and Saturday, July 20-21.

Co-sponsored by the Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society, this second annual event represents a unique opportunity for researchers to spend two days here at the Library and learn about specific topics of interest, including vital records research, city directories and more. A highlight of the seminar will be a special keynote address by Colleen Fitzpatrick, an avid genealogist and author of *Forensic Genealogy*.

A continuing feature from last year's seminar is a library and archives research track, in which facilities with extensive genealogical and historical holdings will outline their collections. Participating libraries and archives include: the Library of Michigan, the Archives of Michigan, the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library, the Kalamazoo Public Library, and the East Lansing Family History Center (part of the LDS network).

Additional information about the Abrams Genealogy Seminar, including the program schedule and registration costs, will be available soon; stay tuned for more details. For additional information about this event, please contact the Library at (517) 373-1300, or by e-mail at librarian@michigan.gov.

We hope to see everyone here for a fantastic seminar in July!

Library of Michigan Hits the Road With Genealogy Workshops

Library of Michigan staff members will be presenting the following programs at other venues this spring:

Kris Rzepczynski

April 14: **"Michigan Roots: Research in the Wolverine State"**
2007 Ohio Genealogical Society Annual Conference, Columbus (OH)

April 19: **"Researching Your Family's Heritage"**
Delta Township Historical Society, Delta Township

May 12: **"Genealogy Research at the Library of Michigan"**
East Lansing Family History Center Seminar, East Lansing

May 12: "Coming to America: Research With Ships Passenger Lists"

East Lansing Family History Center Seminar, East Lansing

May 22: "Coming to America: Research With Ships Passenger Lists"

Stockbridge Area Historical/Genealogical Society, Stockbridge

June 8: **Genealogy Seminar**

Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor

What's New at the Library of Michigan?

Do you want to know what new Michigan and genealogy materials have been added to the Library of Michigan's collection? Access to ANSWER, our online catalog, is available on the Internet at <http://answercat.org>. You can search the monthly new Michigan and genealogy books by clicking on the "Check for New Books" button at the bottom of the ANSWER menu page.

Please note, many of our genealogical resources are part of the non-circulating collection and are only available for on site use at the Library. ANSWER does not provide access to periodical articles, microforms, or CD-ROM and Internet databases, but does indicate the location and call number where the item can be found in the Library of Michigan.

Here are a few notable titles that have arrived since the last issue of *Michigan Genealogist*.

United States. National Archives and Records Administration. *Soundex Index to Naturalization Petitions for the United States District and Circuit Courts, Northern District of Illinois, and Immigration and Naturalization Service District 9, 1840-1950*. 179 reel.

Washington, DC: National Archives, National Archives and Records Administration, 1988.

Microfilm F 540 .U55 1988

An index covers naturalizations filed 1871-1950 in federal courts in Chicago and 1840-1950 in federal courts in Danville and Peoria, IL; Hammond, IN; and Madison and Milwaukee, WI. This index also covers non-federal municipal and county courts in parts of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin.

<http://www.archives.gov/great-lakes/chicago/finding-aids/naturalization-records.html>

United States. Immigration and Naturalization Service. *Manifest of Passengers Arriving in the St. Albans, VT District Through Canadian Pacific, and Atlantic Ports, 1895-1954*. 213 reels.

Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 19__.

Microfilm F 48. U553 1900z

Part of the manifest records that go with the soundex index to the Saint Albans, Vermont District, records that have been on our shelves for many years. It goes from January 1895 to May 1913. This is a 639-roll set that we hope to purchase over a three-year period.

Index Cards to Naturalization Petitions for the United State District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, Cleveland 1855-1967. 33 reels. Washington, DC:

National Archives and Records Administration, 2003.

Microfilm F490 .I66 2003

Halifax Ship Manifest. 50 reels. Ottawa, ON: Library and Archives of Canada, 19__.
Microfilm F 1068. H35 1900z

Consists of immigration passenger manifests for ships arriving at the port of Halifax, Nova Scotia – including ships making intermediate stops at certain other Atlantic ports – from January 1881 to October 1922.

Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, 1906 = Recensement de Manitoba, Saskatchewan et Alberta, 1906. 11 reels. Ottawa, ON: National Archives of Canada, 2003.

Microfilm F 1086.8. C478 2003

In order to track the high rates of population growth in western Canada, the Canadian government called for a special census of the Prairie Provinces. You can search this census online by provinces and districts, but not by surnames, at http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/02015302_e.html.

Events at LM and Libraries Statewide to Celebrate Michigan's Notables



By Casey Warner, Department of History, Arts and Libraries

The Library of Michigan recently announced the 2007 Michigan Notable Books list, an annual selection of recommended books that reflect the state's rich cultural heritage by highlighting Michigan people, places and events.

In honor of these books and their authors, the Library of Michigan Foundation will host the fourth annual 'Night for Notables' from 7 to 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 14. Keynote speakers will be former Michigan Governor William G. Milliken; former *Detroit News* political columnist George Weeks, who also served on the staff of Governor Milliken; and Dave Dempsey, author of "William G. Milliken, Michigan's Passionate Moderate," one of the 2007 Michigan Notable Books.

State Librarian Nancy Robertson will lead the evening, which starts with desserts and wine at 7 p.m. Guests will have the chance to win five of the Notable Books titles signed by their authors. Copies of all the 2007 Michigan Notable Books will be available for purchase. "Night for Notables" is open to all, with tickets priced at \$25 per person. A portion of the evening's proceeds will be used to support the Library of Michigan's special collections and programs. To reserve a spot and get more details, call (517) 373-4692.

Throughout April and May, many of the 2007 Michigan Notable Books authors will take their stories on the road, visiting libraries throughout the state – 67 stops in all – to talk with the public about their books. A full schedule of author visits is available on the Michigan Notable Books Web site at www.michigan.gov/notablebooks.



*Photograph courtesy of
Kim Kauffman
Photography ©2007*

News from the Archives of Michigan

By Robert Garrett, Archives of Michigan

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission has awarded the Archives of Michigan a “Digitizing Historical Records” grant for \$44,000. With the help of this grant, the Archives will seek new methods of making textual materials searchable and available online. The focus of the grant will be the Archives 75,000 Civil War regimental and muster roll records.

The Archives’ online collections Web site, at <http://hal.digitalcollections.cdmhost.com/>, has a revamped look and feel. University of Michigan student Cathie Toshach assisted with the process. The Archives continues to update the entries, and plans to add more digital collections. Future collections will focus on the African American resort community of Idlewild and on Michigan lighthouses.

The Archives of Michigan has completed conservation and restoration work on Michigan Grand Army of the Republic post charters. The Department of Michigan, Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War provided funding for conservation supplies. The department’s records officer, James T. Lyons, PDC, spearheaded his organization’s involvement. As an Archives of Michigan volunteer, Lyons had witnessed the document’s deterioration firsthand. Archivist Helen Taylor completed the project, with some assistance from Kevin Driedger of the Library of Michigan.

Two new Michigan military indexes are now available online. Researchers can access a World War I index and a World War II index via the Archives of Michigan Military Sources page (http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17445_19273_19313-126893--,00.html). The World War I index contains names from the guest register of the Michigan Soldiers and Sailors Headquarters in New York City (the headquarters served as a sort of “hospitality center” for Michigan servicemen.). The World War II index lists the honor roll of missing and dead Michigan military personnel.

Helping the Library of Michigan’s Genealogy Collection Thrive

By Judith K. Moore, Executive Director of the Library of Michigan Foundation

The Library of Michigan’s Abrams Foundation Historical Genealogy Collection is among the nation’s ten largest of its kind. We take pride in knowing that researchers from as far as Canada and Europe travel to Lansing to search the Library’s comprehensive collection of more than 100,000 items, including county histories, census records, vital records, land records, military records, city directories, passenger lists, newspapers and more than 8,000 published family histories. The Library of Michigan truly earns the title of national treasure.



LIBRARY OF
MICHIGAN
FOUNDATION

About 160,000 visitors used the Abrams Genealogy Collection last year. And because of the Library of Michigan's national standing as a top family-research destination, visitors expect a top-tier collection. How do we ensure that the collection remains strong during these challenging economic times? We do it by seeking the support of individuals who care and understand the value of this special collection. Private support makes a difference in the Library of Michigan's genealogy collection. While state funds provide for building maintenance, staff salaries and general operations, donors play a critical role in the Library's ability to annually update its materials, digitize older resources and add new digital subscriptions.

You are reading this newsletter because family research is part of your life and you believe that the Library of Michigan can contribute to your pursuit. Perhaps you have enjoyed a genealogy workshop led by one of our knowledgeable staff members. Maybe you have made an interesting discovery by searching the collection's microfilm, periodicals or electronic resources. Whatever your connection, you understand what a treasure our state library is and how much it has to offer. Today I invite you to explore ways of giving to the Library of Michigan Foundation so that we may continue to provide critical funding for the Abrams Genealogy Collection. Remember, your gift to the foundation is 100 percent tax-deductible, and no gift is too small to make a difference.

Please consider a donation to our 2007 Annual Fund Campaign or contact me for information on how to make a planned gift in support of the Abrams Genealogy Collection. You can reach me at:

Library of Michigan Foundation
702 W. Kalamazoo
P.O. Box 30159
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 373-4470
Email: moorej10@michigan.gov

I look forward to hearing from you!

Genealogy 'How-To' Books at Library of Michigan

By Karen White, Library of Michigan

Did you know that there are some books in the Library of Michigan's genealogy collection that can be checked out? Most patrons who use this collection are well aware that most of the books cannot leave our library, but they may not know that many genealogy "how-to" books can actually circulate on a seven-day loan. Most of the books that fall into this category contain general information and tips on how to do genealogy research, and are in the area of the collection with call numbers beginning with "CS." You may just want to have a look the next time you come to the library. If you are unsure whether a particular book can be checked out for this special short loan period, just take it to the circulation desk and the staff person there can check for you.

Here is a small sample of these special how-to books:

Allen, Desmond Walls. *First Steps In Genealogy: A Beginner's Guide to Researching Your Family History, 1st Ed.* Cincinnati, Ohio: Betterway Books, 1998.
Gene CS16 .A454 1998

Dollarhide, William. *Managing a Genealogical Project: A Complete Manual for the Management and Organization of Genealogical Materials.* Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1999.
Gene CS16 .D64 1999

Hull, Lise. *Tracing Your Family History: The Complete Guide to Locating Your Ancestors and Finding Out Where You Came From.* Pleasantville, N.Y.: Reader's Digest, 2006.
Gene CS16 .H855 2006

Morgan, George G. *How to Do Everything With Your Genealogy.* New York: McGraw-Hill/Osborne, 2004.
Gene CS16 .M69 2004

Rose, Christine. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Genealogy, 2nd Ed.* Indianapolis: Alpha Books, 2005.
Gene CS16 .R66 2005

Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *Family History Made Easy.* Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry Inc., 1998.
Gene CS16 .S98 1998

Women in the Civil War Era

By Gloriane Peck, Library of Michigan

As many genealogists know, female ancestors often prove difficult to trace. While women frequently were not named on land records or early census records, many kept diaries or journals that provide a sense of their everyday lives and insight into their character. While few genealogists are lucky enough to find an ancestor's personal letters or narratives, these materials are helpful to us all as a window into a time and place we can only imagine. Here is a list of some of the Library of Michigan's resources that provide a sense of what life was like for women during one of the country's most difficult periods, the Civil War:

Culpepper, Marilyn Mayer. *All Things Altered: Women in the Wake of Civil War and Reconstruction.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2002.
Main HQ1438.S63 C65 2002

Excerpts from the letters and diaries of five Southern women living in the tumult of Reconstruction.

Trials and Triumphs: The Women of the American Civil War. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1991.

Main E 628 .C85 1991

Draws from the diaries and correspondence of more than 500 19th-century women.

Cumming, Kate. *Kate: The Journal of a Confederate Nurse*. Ed. Richard Barksdale Harwell. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959.

Main E 625 .C8 1959

First published in 1866, this diary tells of hospital life, medical practices and the experiences of soldiers.

Dawson, Sarah Morgan. *The Civil War Diary of Sarah Morgan*. Ed. Charles East. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991.

Genealogy E 565 .D27 1991

A young woman chronicles her coming of age in Louisiana.

Edmonds, S. Emma E. *Memoirs of a Soldier, Nurse and Spy: A Woman's Adventures in the Union Army*. Introduction and annotations by Elizabeth D. Leonard. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999.

Michigan E 608 .E26 1999

One of Michigan's most famous women, Edmonds disguised herself as a man and fought with the 2nd Michigan Infantry Regiment.

Edwards, Laura F. *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Main E 628 .E39 2000

Describes the roles and lives of Southern women – black and white, rich and poor – in the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Faust, Drew Gilpin. *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Main E 628 .F35 1996

Uses the writings of the Confederacy's most elite women to show the upheaval and uncertainty their lives.

Fox, Tryphena Blanche Holder. *A Northern Woman in the Plantation South: Letters of Tryphena Blanche Holder Fox, 1856-1876*. Ed. Wilma King. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1993.

Main E 445 .L8 F68 1993

Tales of day-to-day life from a Massachusetts native living in the Gulf states.

Hawks, Esther Hill. *A Woman Doctor's Civil War: Esther Hill Hawks' Diary*. Ed. Gerald Schwartz. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1984.

Genealogy E 621 .H36 1984

A Northern abolitionist goes to the South to serve as a teacher and a doctor for black Union soldiers and recently freed slaves.

Leonard, Elizabeth D. *All the Daring of the Soldier*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999.

Main E 628 .L45 1999

An account of female spies and soldiers, as well as women engaged in resistance.

Michigan. Civil War Centennial Observance Commission. *Michigan Women in the Civil War*. Lansing, 1963.

Michigan Documents E 514.M6258 1963

Shares the stories of women who worked as soldiers or nurses in battle, or who held family and business life together on the homefront.

Oates, Stephen B. *A Woman of Valor: Clara Barton and the Civil War*. New York: Free Press; Toronto: Maxwell MacMillan Canada; New York: Maxwell MacMillan International, 1994.

Main E 621 .O24 1994

This biography of the founder of the American Red Cross focuses on her work during the Civil War to help the wounded.

Canada on the United State Census

By Charles Hagler, Library of Michigan

One of frequently asked questions that reference librarians at the Library of Michigan have received over the years has been about entries in United States census records dealing with Canadian birthplace. You will see such entries such as Canada West, Canada French or Upper Canada under the place of birth column in the census. Sometimes you will see what is now a province of Canada listed as a separate entity. What did they mean? You may find it helpful to know a little bit of Canadian history to understand what is going on.

After a series of 18th-century European wars, France gradually lost control of what is now Canada, except for two small islands off the coast of Newfoundland (Saint-Pierre and Miquelon Islands). England gained control of what was then called Acadia and Newfoundland in 1713. The area known as Acadia was renamed Nova Scotia. Prince Edward Island, then known as Ile Saint-Jean, was re-named Saint John's Island. Later it became an independent colony in 1769. England's biggest prize was the area called New France following the French and Indian War in 1763. This included an area from the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River (present-day Ontario and Quebec) to the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, which would become known as the Old Northwest Territory. Control of the Ohio River valley became a source of conflict and one of the causes of the American Revolution.

The American Revolution resulted not only in the United States gaining control of the Ohio River valley, but in a large number of English-speaking American colonists – who were loyal to Crown – resettling in New France (now called Quebec) and Nova Scotia. This migration resulted in New Brunswick becoming a separate colony from Nova Scotia in 1784 and the move to separate the English-speaking and Protestant colonists

who settled on the upper part of the Saint Lawrence River from the French-speaking and Catholic settlers located on the lower end of the Saint Lawrence.

Following the *Constitutional Act* of 1791, the colony of Quebec (formerly New France) was divided to create Upper Canada and Lower Canada. They were both governed by Great Britain as two separate colonies. According to the *Act of Union* of 1841, Upper and Lower Canada were united into the Province of Canada. Upper Canada was renamed Canada West, and Lower Canada was renamed Canada East. Thus, before Confederation in 1867, what we think of as eastern Canada consisted of several British provinces: Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada.

The establishment of the Canadian Confederation in 1867, under the *British North America Act*, united the provinces of Canada with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick into the Dominion of Canada. Canada East became Quebec, and Canada West became Ontario. British Columbia became a province in 1871 and Prince Edward Island in 1873. Newfoundland and Labrador did not become Canadian provinces until 1949.

So if your ancestors told the census enumerators that they were born in Upper or Lower Canada, they were most likely born between 1791 and 1841. If they were born in Canada East or West, then they were probably born between 1841 and 1867. In the 1870 and 1880 censuses, just Canada was listed as the birthplace in most cases. But what about those ancestors you may have found on the U. S. Census from 1890 to 1950 with their birthplace listed as Canada French or Canada English? This was a requirement of the U. S. Bureau of Census. The 1890 instruction to the census enumerators said:

“If born in Canada or Newfoundland, write the word ‘English’ or ‘French’ after the particular place of birth, so as to distinguish between persons born in any part of British America of French and English extraction respectively. *This is most important requirement, and must be closely observed in each case and the distinction carefully made.* (italics theirs)

p.28. *Measuring America: The Decennial Censuses From 1790 to 2000*. Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau, 2002.

Handy Guide to Modern Land Records

By Edwina Morgan, Library of Michigan

You probably do not need to worry about range or township numbers when starting your search for land surveyed with the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), in use since the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. If you already know the county and township in which the land was located, that will put you in the right location. However, there may be a couple of exceptions, one of which is when using the statewide subdivision plat database (http://www.cis.state.mi.us/platmaps/sr_subs.asp).

The state of Michigan began compiling a file of plats in 1873. In the early 1900s, all

plats on file with the counties and those recorded prior to 1873 were duplicated, and the copies were added to the state's files. The statewide plat database includes all plats in Michigan, beginning with those created under the 1821 territorial act for recording town plats.

When using this database, you may narrow down your search by specifying the number and direction of both the known range and township. This is very helpful, as in some older neighborhoods the subdivision name may be unknown. It also may assist you in finding land surveyed prior to the current survey system, such as the Ribbon Farms along the Detroit and Rouge Rivers.

Statewide Search for Subdivision Plats - Advance Search - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by State of Michigan DIT

Address: http://www.cis.state.mi.us/platmaps/or_subs_adv.asp

BUREAU OF CONSTRUCTION CODES

Statewide Search for Subdivision Plats

Subdivision Name:

County:

Card Number:

Section:

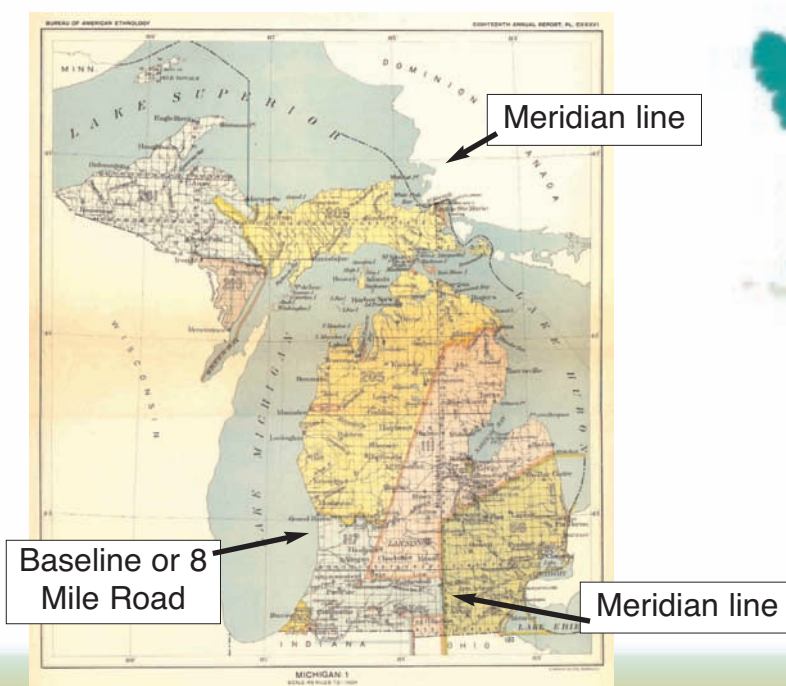
Township: ex: 02 N

Range: ex: 10 E

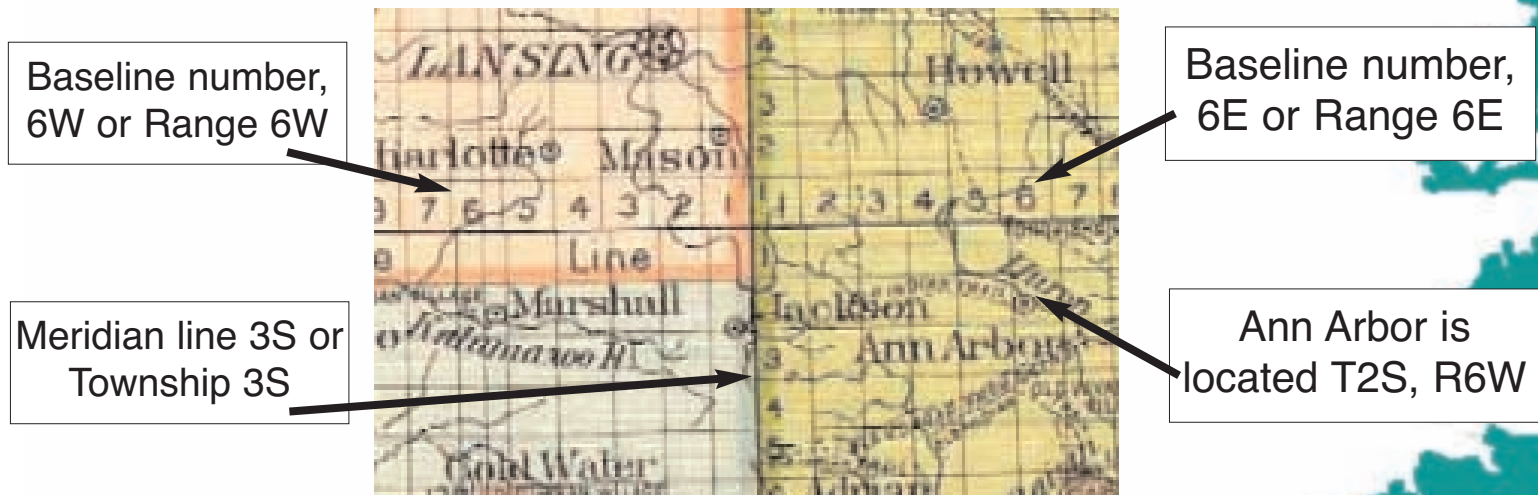
Private Claim:

This system provides access to digital images, with print capability, of the plats and related documents of land subdivisions in the State of Michigan's plat files. The State of Michigan bases its relationship with all

If you do not know the county, township or subdivision, then be aware that there is both a meridian line and a baseline that form an axis in the state of Michigan. The meridian line runs north and south, just east of the center of the Lower Peninsula. This line determines the range numbers. The baseline is equal to 8-mile Road, running across the state west from the Detroit region. This line determines the township numbers.



Any range numbers will be specified E for east or W for west, meaning that the range in question lands east or west of the meridian line. All the township lines will be listed as N for north or S for south, any numbers being either north or south of the baseline.



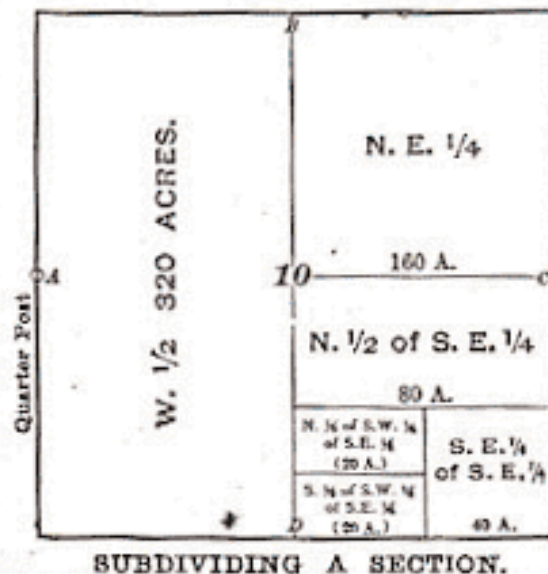
By the time you use the meridian-baseline axis, you will have pinpointed a township composed of sections. One section is one square mile or 640 acres. Within a township, the sections are numbered from right to left and then back right again, starting at the top right-hand corner and working in a zigzag pattern to the bottom right hand corner.

	1 Mile					6 Miles - 480 Chas.
	6	5	4	3	2	1
	7	8	9	10	11	12
	18	17	16	15	14	13
	19	20	21	22	23	24
	30	29	28	27	26	25
	31	32	33	34	35	36
6 Miles - 480 Chas.						

Sections are then cut up into quarters of 160 acres each – the NW 1/4 (northwest quarter), NE 1/4, SW 1/4 and SE 1/4.

These quarters can then be divided. The northwest slice of land of the northwest quarter of a section would be listed as NW 1/4 NW 1/4, or the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter. If it were the slice in the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of a section, it would read SE 1/4 NW 1/4. At times, land was divided up into even smaller sections and purchased across quarter lines.

The Land Ordinance of 1785 brought this rectangular survey system into use, which replaced the old Metes and Bounds system of the Colonial Era. The land in the original thirteen colonies, plus Maine, Vermont, Tennessee, Kentucky, Texas, West Virginia and parts of Ohio, were surveyed with the Metes and Bounds system. With this older system, there was a great reliance on boundary lines named after neighbors, as well as physical descriptions such as “large red oak” and “fork of the river.” Boundaries and land parcels were often disputed as a result, and much money was spent on land that was never held by the purchaser. The ensuing lawsuits and claims do, however, provide genealogists with valuable resources for the time pre-dating the current survey system.



Land terms from the most broad to the most specific:

State
County
Township number
Range number
Section number
Portion of section
Quarter section
Tract
Parcel
Acre

Public Land Claims in the American State Papers

By Leelyn Johnson, Library of Michigan

The public domain, or public land, is land owned by the federal government that is sold under laws passed by Congress. The first claims were compiled and printed in the *American State Papers 1789-1838*, a 38-volume set containing the legislative and executive documents of Congress for that time period. Michigan was one of 30 states that the federal government formed from the public domain. The first 13 colonies, along with Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont and West Virginia, were never part of the public domain. The public land records in the *American State Papers* can be a useful resource for genealogical information, as they may include the age, marital and citizenship status, place of residence, and record of military service for the person making the claim, the locations of claims, and names of spouses, children and other relatives who do not appear on the pre-1850 censuses.

American State Papers can be accessed online through the Library of Congress Web site at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwsp.html> and in paper form at the Library of Michigan (**Genealogy J 33. A488 1994**).

For further reading, you can refer to the following, which are available in the Library of Michigan's Abrams Historical Collection:

Barsi, James C. *The Basic Researcher's Guide to Homesteads and Other Federal Land Records*. Colorado Springs, CO: Nuthatch Grove Press, c1994.
Genealogy CS 49 .B36 1994

Hone, E. Wade. *Land and Property Research in the United States*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Ancestry, c1997.
Genealogy CS 49 .H66 1997

Tips for Preserving Your Family Treasures: Photographs

By Carol Fink, Library of Michigan

Photographs are a record of the most important events ever experienced. The proper selection of film, developing and storage locations will help ensure these images are preserved for generations to come. Studies have shown sepia and black and white photographs to be the most stable over time. Color photographs can fade to the point where many of the finer details are lost. Choose color film wisely, as some have a longer shelf life than others. Proper developing is equally as important as the kind of film you use, so choose labs or select home film-processing equipment that can provide archival-quality developing.

Factors to consider when displaying or storing photographs are much the same as for paper documents. Too little humidity and the paper can crack. Too high and mold can take hold or foxing can occur. For photos, light can never be too dim, but it can certainly be too bright. Experts recommend either hanging important photographs away from bright light or using UV glass or UV Plexiglas in place of regular glass. For irreplaceable photographs, consider making facsimile (identical) copies for display purposes. Store the original in an acid-free enclosure, either flat in a box or hanging vertically in a file cabinet away from heat sources.

Choosing the proper scrapbook in which to store photographs is also very important. Many of us marveled over the "magnetic" pages in 1980s-era photo albums. When the "magnet" turned out to be adhesive, many photos were doomed to being ripped apart when removed, or the adhesive migrated into the paper and discolored the photo. A better choice is an album with Mylar pockets or acid-free paper pages. Avoid pressure-sensitive adhesives around anything you value. While removal is possible, it may take a lot of time and money and require the help of a conservator.

For more information, read the chapters about photographic and film preservation in *Caring for Your Family Treasures* by Jane S. Long and Richard W. Long. Also visit the Northeast Document Conservation Center's Web site at <http://www.nedcc.org> and search for "care of photographs."

School for the Blind: Women, Wonder and Odd Fellows

By Robert Garrett, Archives of Michigan

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in Lansing's City Pulse newspaper on March 22, 2006 (<http://archives.lansingcitypulse.com/060322/news/index4.asp>). It is part of a series of features, written by Archives of Michigan staff, that explores Lansing's history.

It was 1963, and Little Stevie Wonder had a problem — the Detroit schools couldn't accommodate the young entertainer's touring schedule. Fortunately, he found a solution at the Michigan School for the Blind in Lansing. Wonder is, of course, the school's most famous alumnus, but he was one of many people to walk the grounds at 715 Willow St. That site has its origins in a very different sort of educational institute: The Michigan Female Seminary.

The Michigan Female Seminary was established through the efforts of two sisters, Abigail and Delia Rogers. The two hailed from New York and taught at Albion College and at the State Normal School in Ypsilanti (now Eastern Michigan University). Birt Darling, author of "City in the Forest: The Story of Lansing," described Abigail as a "big, raw-boned spinster" and Delia as timid.

Yet both women had a calling — to respond to the male-only enrollment practices of the University of Michigan and the newly opened (in 1855) Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University). The sisters lobbied the state Legislature, hoping to establish a ladies' school that would provide higher education opportunities to young women.

However, state support never happened. Undaunted, the women began holding classes at the Capitol in 1855. They soon moved to the Ohio House, an early Lansing hotel on West Washtenaw Street, which is part of the area west of the current Knapp's Building.



The Michigan School for the Blind property as seen circa 1935. Photo courtesy of the Archives of Michigan.

The sisters used private donations to build a brick building at 715 Willow. They enjoyed considerable community support — enough to aid them in closing down a neighboring brewery at the corner of Pine and Maple streets. The name of the brewery may be lost to antiquity, but its proprietor was a German immigrant named Weimann. The Rogers sisters objected to the smell of both the beer and of Weimann's pigpens, and to loud nocturnal singing from the beer garden. The seminary closed after Abigail Rogers' death in 1869. According to author Helen E. Grainger, more than 1,000 women attended the school during its existence.

In 1871, the Grand Order of Odd Fellows, a fraternal organization similar to the Masons, acquired the Willow Street property. There the group established the Odd Fellows Institute, a home for its elderly and disabled members. Brown's 1873 Directory of Lansing noted that Lansing citizens donated 45 acres of land as well as the north wing of the Misses Rogers Female College Building to the Odd Fellows. The directory also credited Delia Rogers as the donor of "a very large portion of the land purchase, a library of about 1,500 volumes and a fine philosophical apparatus." In addition, the International Order of Odd Fellows also established a hall on Washington Avenue. That building now houses Elderly Instruments.

Eventually, the Odd Fellows found the institute too expensive to maintain. Meanwhile, the state needed some property for the Flint-based Michigan School for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind, which had run out of room. Officials decided to move the blind students (relatively few in number) to a new location at 715 Willow. The state signed a two-year lease with the Odd Fellows.

The Lansing location was meant to be temporary. The Legislature felt that there were already enough state institutions in Lansing and that another city should be selected for a permanent location. However, the Odd Fellows, anxious to sell, made a generous offer for the property. The Legislature approved that offer in 1880, and the Michigan School for the Blind relocated to Willow Street, holding its first class on Sept. 29, 1880.

By 1883, the school had about 80 students, according to Polk's 1883 Lansing City Directory. Michigan residents attended the school free of charge, and the school's trustees provided aid to indigent children. The curriculum included broom and basket making, and the girls also learned to sew, knit and make beadwork. The directory listed three buildings: a main edifice, a boys' dormitory and a laundry.

None of those original buildings remain. Today, the campus' three oldest surviving buildings are the High School Building, the Superintendent's House and the Administration Building (or Old Main), which all sit on the east end of the campus. The buildings were built in 1912, 1914 and 1916, respectively, by celebrated Lansing architect Edwyn Bowd.

Bowd also designed Lansing City Hall, Lansing's first Baptist church, the agriculture and engineering buildings on the campus of Michigan Agricultural College and

Pilgrim Congregational Church. The west side of the campus features more recent additions, built in the 1950s and 1960s. The newer structures are mostly one-and two-story buildings with low gabled roofs. Campus visitors can thus experience a nice mixture of the modern and the historical. In 1986, the State Historical Preservation Office erected an historical marker on the grounds.

In 1995, after 115 years, the School for the Blind remerged with the School for the Deaf. The blind students were transferred to Flint and the Lansing campus was abandoned.

Soon after, the Mid-Michigan Leadership Academy, a charter school, leased the grounds from the state and began holding classes there.

The fate of the land remains up in the air, caught in a tug-of-war between the charter school and the city of Lansing.

Meanwhile, the School for the Blind's legacy can still be experienced. One year ago, Michigan School for the Blind and Deaf officials contacted Michigan Historical Museum personnel. A 1930s Chickering baby grand piano, once used by Wonder during his studies in Lansing, was transferred to the museum, where it sits on the third floor as a landmark of Lansing's heritage.



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